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life in Florence in the sixteenth century are finely drawn and colored, and we feel as we read all the charm of that fascinating region and that brilliant society. The courtiers, wits, diplomats, French, Spanish, Venetian, Roman, all pass before us, and glimpses of the church interiors vary the pageant of luxurious palace life. As the scenes lie in Italy, we are of course treated to plots and murders; but there is none of that nauseous detail of villany which overloads the pages of Signor Guerrazzi. Neither the love nor the crime is overdone, as both would have been had the whole truth been told about the fair Venetian runaway.

M. des Essarts's epigrams have not the point of those of Houssaye or Voltaire, yet there are several ingenious specimens in that kind in his novel. Perhaps the best thing in it is the picture of Montaigne at the court of Francis. The character of Francis is ably, and, on the whole, fairly drawn. A shade deeper of tyranny and profligacy would come nearer to the mark.

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10. — *Le Cardinal de Bérulle. Sa Vie, ses Écrits, son Temps.* Par M. NOURRISSON, Professeur de Philosophie à la Faculté des Lettres de Clermont. Paris: Didier. 1856. 12mo. pp. 263.

THE Cardinal de Bérulle was in many respects a remarkable man, and many dignitaries of the Church, whose services to the ecclesiastical order and to theology have been far inferior to his, have been honored by elaborate biographies. We cannot regard M. Nourrisson's attempt to rescue his hero from undeserved neglect as very successful. He has not the skill or the learning to make out a good case for the Cardinal, and his parallel between Bérulle and Richelieu is as feeble as it is preposterous. As a statesman, Bérulle was unlucky, not to say incapable. His negotiations with Rome, his interposition in the affair of Henrietta of England, and his manœuvres at the French court, were alike failures. We had not expected to see a defence of Bérulle the politician.

But we had looked to find in this volume a full and satisfactory history of the first days of the "Oratoire" in France, of which Bérulle was the founder. This institution, to which the Carmelite foundations in France were only the preface, was really the monument of the famous Clermont scholar. The walls of that old Gothic chapel, which break with their quaint buttresses the even arcades of the new Rue de Rivoli, are a better testimony to the zeal and learning of the reformer of French monasticism than any record of his transactions in the state. Of this hopeful religious achievement, M. Nourrisson's account is sadly inade-

quate. He tells just enough to let us see how much more there is to tell, and how much greater such a theme would become in the hands of that eloquent Protestant and liberal divine who is, in the Chapel of the Oratoire, Bérulle's greatest successor. The life of the Cardinal should have been written by one of the Coquerels.

M. Nourrisson tells us that the Fathers of the Oratoire have five several times made the attempt to get their founder into the company of the Saints, but always without success. They were able, doubtless, to present some substantial reasons. Bérulle hated heresy with exemplary devotion, spoke of it as the chief and crowning sin, advised the suppression of Protestantism, especially in the siege of Rochelle, and, except in one or two cases, made full proof of his Catholic faith. He was orthodox, too, in regard to the Copernican heresy, believing that the notion of Galileo, that the earth moved round the sun, had only the doubtful merit of a spiritual symbol. On this theory, he says, the unchanging and luminous sun may stand for Christ, while the changing earth is a sign of sinful man. His love of the monastic state, also, if not so ascetic as that of the mendicant orders, was not less sincere. He would have no man become a monk except from a holy call to that estate. If he could not work miracles, he had an unbounded belief in them, and confirmed the story of the carriage which, in passing the bridge of Biscay, with its precious freight of Carmelite sisters, was preserved from destruction by invisible spiritual hands, that held it balanced in the air. Such claims as these has Bérulle upon the gratitude of the Vatican. But the Vatican is not grateful; it has allowed the fame of its honest defender to die away, and has spurned the requests of that noble society which Bossuet eulogized so grandly, and even Voltaire could praise.

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11. — *L'Égypte Contemporaine 1840 – 1857. De Mehemet Ali à Said Pacha.* Par M. PAUL MERRUAU, précédée d'une Lettre de M. FERD. DE LESSEPS. Paris: Didier. 1858. 8vo. pp. 390.

M. MERRUAU'S work, on Egypt as it is, is not a record of travel, but a precise, digested, statistical treatise on the progress of that country within the last score of years, and on its present condition, political, military, agricultural, commercial, and financial. The Introduction gives a rapid historical survey of Egypt, from the remotest time down to the last days of Mehemet Ali, adopting in regard to the ancient dynasties a somewhat doubtful chronology. The First Book, in six chapters, treats successively of the administrative organization, the Pachas, Sheiks, and Judges, giving a discriminating estimate of the character